

in the United States, if there is not a single contractor that makes what you are looking for in the United States, then, by all means, you are going to have to buy that overseas. If there is such a price differential, such an enormous price differential that it is a waste of taxpayer dollars to buy it from American companies—and, frankly, those are fairly minute exceptions—then it makes sense to do a work-around on the “Buy American” law.

But we have seen hundreds of billions of dollars in waivers, waivers that are being used for reasons that you just can’t justify but also through a process that includes really no oversight. On that waiver that allows for goods to be purchased overseas when you can’t find it in the United States, there are examples where a simple Google search could have found the item in the United States, but a waiver was still signed, allowing it to be bought overseas because it wasn’t available here—just no oversight, making sure we are only giving these waivers in the right circumstances.

I have talked a number of times on this floor about a company that folded up shop in Waterbury, CT, a legacy company in the Naugatuck Valley, Ansonia Copper & Brass. It made the copper nickel tubing for the American submarine fleet. It was the only company in the United States that made this particular item.

It is out of business today because of the loopholes in the “Buy American” law. We are now buying our copper nickel tubing from a foreign company. Now, that put dozens of people out of work in Connecticut, but it also put in jeopardy our national security. If the supplier of this copper nickel tubing, which is not something you can make easily—it requires incredible expertise, complicated machinery. If the country we are getting it from today decides they are not going to supply it to us because they oppose the way in which we are using it, we can’t make it in the United States any longer. You can’t just reassemble the ability to make that particular good, complicated tubing that goes inside one of the most complicated pieces of machinery in the U.S. Navy, a submarine. You can’t just do that overnight. So at the very least, we should be getting all of the information we need to do proper oversight on this process of granting waivers.

I have been pleased at the willingness of Chairman McCain and his staff, along with the ranking member Senator Reed, to work with us on this amendment, this sunlight amendment, this disclosure amendment. Hopefully, over the course of today or tomorrow, we will be able to include this in one of the managers’ packages that we adopt on the Senate floor, and it will allow us to have a more robust conversation as to why on Earth we spent U.S. taxpayer dollars on this van, when \$3 million—at the height of the auto crisis—could have gone to an American company making a similar vehicle. That is

a conversation that on behalf of the literally hundreds of thousands of American workers who don’t have jobs today because we are spending taxpayer dollars overseas—for their sake, they deserve for us to have that debate.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). The clerk will call the roll. The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. CASSIDY and Ms. COLLINS pertaining to the introduction of S. 1531 are printed in today’s RECORD under “Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.”)

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

PATIENT FREEDOM ACT

Mr. CASSIDY. I wish to say briefly that I thank Senator COLLINS for her thoughtful review of the Patient Freedom Act, who after our office has probably reviewed it the most and made several substantial changes that have made it better. I also thank her for her speech, which was a very thoughtful critique of why we are replacing ObamaCare—not because it is the President’s bill but because of things that she described, where people have an incentive not to earn more money and a penalty if they do, which goes against the American values that if you work hard you can be more successful.

It should not be that the Federal Government is discouraging that. I thank her for her thoughtful speech, her thoughtful comments, and her great input into the final product.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

EXPORT OF AMERICAN LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, for years, we have witnessed Vladimir Putin, the President of Russia, wreak havoc across Europe. Putin has invaded and carved up free, independent, and democratic countries, such as Georgia and Ukraine. He has bullied our friends in the European Union. He has intimidated our allies in the North Atlantic

Treaty Organization, NATO. A principal weapon of Putin’s has been Russia’s energy supplies—specifically, natural gas. Putin has used Russia’s natural gas to extort, to threaten, and to coerce our allies and our partners. He has repeatedly shut off natural gas supplies to Ukraine and has retaliated against countries that have come to Ukraine’s aid.

So 21 countries—21 countries—import more than 40 percent of their natural gas from Russia. Of these 21 nations, 13 are members of NATO and 5 of these NATO members import nearly 100 percent of their gas from Russia.

I recently returned from Eastern Europe. Our NATO allies and European partners are desperate to find alternative sources of natural gas. They are seeking to develop their own natural gas resources. But amazingly, Putin is funding activists who oppose hydraulic fracturing in Europe.

It is clear that Putin wants to keep our NATO allies dependent on Russian energy. Our NATO allies have publicly called on Congress to help them access America’s natural gas. We can do that by adopting my amendment, No. 1582. My amendment would help countries such as Ukraine, our NATO allies, and others access America’s vast supplies of natural gas. Specifically, it would ensure that the Secretary of Energy makes timely decisions on applications to export Liquefied Natural Gas, or LNG.

Under current law, exports of LNG to countries such as our NATO allies are presumed to be in the public interest, unless the Secretary finds otherwise. But over the last several years, the Secretary’s decisionmaking process has been, at best, unpredictable. My amendment would fix that. Specifically, my amendment would require the Secretary to approve or disapprove LNG export applications within 45 days after the environmental review process is complete.

My amendment would ensure that legal challenges to LNG export projects are resolved expeditiously. It would also require exporters to publicly disclose the countries to which LNG has been delivered.

In January of this year, the energy committee held a hearing on legislation that is identical to my amendment. At that hearing, the Department of Energy testified that my legislation is “a solution we will be able to comply with.”

I am encouraged by DOD’s support for this legislation. I am also encouraged by the support of the National Association of Manufacturers and others who testified that LNG exports would create thousands of jobs across America and help reduce our Nation’s trade deficit.

The United States is the world’s largest producer of natural gas. We have more than enough natural gas to meet our own needs and use our gas to bring about positive change throughout the world.